

News from Nova Scotia

News from Dalhousie Libraries

Marlo MacKay, Communications Coordinator

Indigenous Knowledge & Access Symposium



Indigenous Knowledge and Access **Symposium**



Library and Archives
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives
Canada

On November 15, we partnered with Library & Archives Canada and Dalhousie's School of Information Management to present a day of stimulating discussion and presentations to 200 information management professionals on the topic of Indigenous knowledge and access.

The symposium focused on the work and challenges of documenting and improving access to Indigenous knowledge. Presentations included:

Keynote: *Reconciliation in Canada today: Considerations on Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing and Integrative Science*

by Elder Dr. Albert Marshall and Dr. Cheryl Bartlett

Creating Circles of Collaboration: Identifying Successful Paths for Collaboration between Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums, and Indigenous Peoples and Communities

by Dr. Sandra Toze, Dalhousie University and Cynthia Boyko, Library and Archives Canada

Acknowledging and Addressing Indigenous Rights at the NCTR

by Raymond Frogner, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Elaine MacInnis, Dalhousie University, and Morning Star Padilla, Dalhousie University

Glooscap Legends, Oral histories and Our Cultural Memory Timeline

by Gerald Gloade, Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre

Current Cultural Initiatives in Supporting Indigenous Access to Knowledge

by Catherine Arseneau, Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University

LAC's Indigenous Language and Culture Initiatives

by Marnie Burnham, Library and Archives Canada and Lorna Chisholm, Library and Archives Canada

Dal Reads Classes with Nalo Hopkinson

This year's Dal Reads book is *Brown Girl in the Ring* by Nalo Hopkinson. Set in the near future, in a dystopic Toronto, *Brown Girl in the Ring* contains themes of folklore, feminism, and magic realism steeped in Afro-Caribbean culture. The novel won multiple awards around the time of its release in 1998 and was a Canada Reads finalist in 2008.

Nalo was unable to join us in person for any readings this year, but we bridged the distance from Halifax to California using video conferencing technology. She has been able to speak live to four classes, giving both readings and answering questions from the students.



Starting the New Year off Relaxed: Chair Massage

The Dal Libraries Health & Wellness committee is working on a year-long wellness plan for the workplace. One of the initiatives was to bring free chair massages to staff, which happened on January 10th. Students from a local massage therapy school gave fifteen-minute massages at multiple work sites.

The Future is Open

On Thursday, January 10th, the Dal Libraries launched its first in-house produced open textbook, *Environmental Science: A Canadian Perspective* by renowned conservation biologist and Dalhousie faculty member Bill Freedman (1950–2015). Speakers at the event included George-Ann Merrill, Bill’s wife; Dr. Teri Balsler, Provost of Dalhousie; Dr. David Patriquin, a colleague of Bill’s; and Geoff Brown, digital scholarship librarian.

“The production of this open textbook is a celebration of the legacy of Bill Freedman, and an exploration of new possibilities to provide open access to scholarly resources at no cost to the reader,” said Donna Bourne-Tyson, Dalhousie’s University Librarian.

An open textbook is a textbook that has been published under an open copyright license and made available online freely to students, faculty, and members of the public. Most open textbooks are digital in format as there are fewer costs associated with digital publication. A digital format is also easier for people to access regardless of their location.

This is the first open textbook the Libraries have produced as part of its Digital Scholarship Initiative. Under the umbrella of the Digital Scholarship Initiative, the Dal Libraries offers services that include online journal publishing and hosting (OJS), eTextbook hosting, digital collections metadata development, and other related initiatives.

As the digital scholarship librarian for the Dalhousie Libraries, Geoff Brown is the point person for much of this work, including the production of this open textbook.

“It’s very satisfying to be a part of this innovative project,” said Geoff. “Providing access to information is what we in the Libraries strive to do and removing barriers like cost for a textbook is one more way we achieve that.”

Geoff worked on the production of the textbook throughout the summer. The content came to him in the form of Microsoft Word files. The first thing he did was remove the many images, figures, and tables in the document. Next, he put the text into an open publishing system called Pressbooks. Finally, he put the images back in.



Geoff Brown (Digital Scholarship Librarian, Dalhousie Libraries)

“Open textbooks differ greatly from commercially published textbooks. Commercial publishers use digital rights management to control distribution of their publications. Our goal is to welcome as wide a distribution as possible of the textbook we’ve produced,” said Ann Barrett, Associate University Librarian for Scholarly Communications.

Environmental Science: A Canadian Perspective is available in [DalSpace](#), Dalhousie’s institutional repository. You can also find it in Novanet, the union catalogue for all Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions and in *WorldCat*, a catalogue of the collections of 72,000 libraries in 170 countries and territories. Next steps for distributing the textbook include reaching out to other Canadian open textbook initiatives so more Canadian universities will know about it.

Throughout the production of this textbook the Libraries have been in close contact with George-Ann Merrill, Bill’s wife. After Bill passed, the Dal Libraries acquired his papers and digital files for preservation in the Archives.

“Thanks to George-Ann’s willingness to trust us with this project, we are now able to share Bill’s work with the world,” said Michael Moosberger, associate university librarian, archives, special Collections, and records management; and university archivist.

10 Things You Might Not Know about the Dalhousie Libraries

You probably know that the [Dalhousie Libraries](#) support the university’s learning and research communities with our expertise, services, collections, and spaces. And, of course, you’ll find books, books, and more books. But there’s so much more to the Dalhousie Libraries. Here are the top ten things you (likely) didn’t know about us:

1. We were the first academic library in Canada to offer [3D printing](#), in 2012.
2. We were also the first university-funded academic library in Canada to have a [seed library](#), offering users access to diverse varieties of plants.
3. The MacRae Library on the Agricultural Campus is home to the only East Coast hub of the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#).
4. We [offer open access journal hosting](#) for faculty and students, and we just published our [first open textbook, *Environmental Science: A Canadian Perspective*](#).
5. The learning commons on the first floor of the Killam Library is now a [Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Legacy Space](#).
6. We manage [Brightspace](#), the learning management system of Dalhousie. We also manage [classroom technology](#) on the Studley and Sexton campuses and video conferencing support for the university.

7. On average, more than 10,000 people visit our seven Dal Libraries locations daily.
8. Last year, we performed 72,270 transactions with library users across our seven locations.
9. We offer in-class instruction sessions on how to do research and other information literacy skills. Last year, we offered 358 of these sessions, reaching more than 11,000 participants. There are over 100 instructional videos as well!
10. We have a copyright office which offers support to faculty, staff and students.

And how about a bonus fact to wrap up? Our website, which is our virtual branch library, gets 2.9 million hits a year.